

Regional Council Activity Report

November 8, 1999



Briefing to Member Agencies from Executive Director James M. Bourey

Executive Director's Report

During his history-making climb of Mount Everest in 1953, Sir Edmund Hillary lost his footing — and nearly his life. He was saved by his guide, Tenzing Norkay, who held the line taut and firmly planted his axe in the ice. Tenzing was heralded as a hero, but he refuted the glory, saying: "Mountain climbers always help one another. It's a routine part of their profession." It's a quality other professions would do well to master.

It has been a period of remarkable relationship-building for the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG). From the Regional Council's decision to allow the City of Apache Junction to sit at the table as a non-voting member, to meetings with the Pima Association of Governments and the Governor's Vision 21 Transportation Task Force, MAG continues to develop the key partnerships we will need to help bring us into the new millennium.

There is no doubt in my mind that such partnerships are critical to the future success of our region. As we enter the 1999-2000 legislative session, we will soon find ourselves once again confronting issues which require the efforts of a coalesced, unified organization. The partnerships that we have made and continue to make will only enhance those efforts.

Along with those mentioned above, other relationship-building activities of late have included our participation in the Arizona Town Hall "Uniting a Diverse Arizona," the Global Cities Regional Conference, and serving as a member of the Executive Directors Conference and the Census Advisory Committee. Additionally, MAG recently hosted a number of foreign delegations interested in American regional activities, began hosting twelve Valley Vision 2025 public forums, and held a MAG Manager's retreat. Some of the upcoming activities MAG has planned to strengthen our relationships include meetings with the Four Corners States Urban Council of Governments (COG) Directors; luncheons with legislative and Governor's staff members; and separate retreats for City Managers and the Regional Council.

MAG is committed to these ongoing efforts to educate and inform a variety of groups, businesses and individuals about our regional role. After all, there will always be new mountains to climb.



Regional Council Meeting Report for November 3, 1999

Council Allows Apache Junction Seat at Table

In a split vote, the Regional Council approved the City of Apache Junction becoming a non-voting member of the Council. The move enables Apache Junction, which includes residents in both Pinal and Maricopa Counties, a seat at the Regional Council table to discuss issues of shared concern. Apache Junction is subject to the MAG air quality conformity analysis and is included in the MAG PM-10 Non-Attainment Area. Apache Junction falls within the Phoenix urbanized area as defined by the U.S. Census, and its population is used in calculations made by the federal government in determining MAG transportation funds. The area including Apache Junction is considered when planning for the MAG Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program, and the city is fully integrated into the MAG 9-1-1 System. The Regional Council vote included a provision asking MAG staff to explore whether MAG by-laws need to be amended to allow the change.

For more information contact Dennis Smith, MAG Assistant Director, (602) 254-6300.

MAG Approves Funding for Freeway Median Cable Barriers

After a series of tragic accidents involving fatal crossovers on urban freeways, the MAG Regional Council unanimously approved a request to fund median cable barriers on all new freeways (including new freeways under construction) with MAG freeway funds. The proposal included a plan to fund median cable barriers on all existing freeways with Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) Hazard Elimination Safety funds. In addition, the proposal called for an amendment to the FY 2000-2004 MAG Transportation Improvement Program to include seven initial median barrier projects, and encouraged ADOT to provide for the maximum landscaping feasible.

For more information contact Terry Johnson, MAG Transportation Manager, (602) 254-6300.

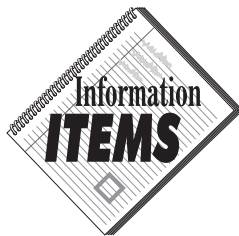


Upcoming Issues

Cuts in Social Services Grants Threaten Lives

Proposed congressional funding cuts, which would reduce federal Social Services Block Grant funds by more than \$600,000 in the Maricopa Region, may have life-threatening impacts, according to the MAG Human Services Committee. Recommendations for the cuts, which would go into effect in July 2000, could result in an immediate reduction in social services contracts in the region. The continuous reduction in funds for the Social Services Block Grant impacts the Valley's ability to provide critical survival services to the region's neediest citizens — including meals for the elderly, services for homeless people, domestic violence programs, adult day care and home care, as well as case management services provided through the Valley's 18 community action programs. Scheduled for discussion at the Management Committee meeting November 17, the MAG Human Services Committee is urging member agencies to give serious thought to how to prevent these cuts from turning into a regional crisis.

For more information contact Carol Kratz, MAG Human Services Manager, (602) 254-6300.



Information Items

Move Over, Make Room

Not that anyone needs actual numbers to confirm the Valley's growth, but we have them — and the MAG Regional Council has approved them. The Council approved the July 1, 1999 Maricopa County Resident Population Update prepared by the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), with input from MAG. DES shows that Maricopa County's population has swelled to 2,913,475, an increase of 107,375 residents in the past year (3.8%). The State of Arizona population is tabbed at 4,924,350.

For those wanting to know how much their own cities have grown, MAG staff has prepared its draft July 1, 1999 Municipality Resident Population Updates. The Updates were prepared using data supplied and verified by MAG member agencies, and will be presented to the MAG Management Committee for approval November 17th.

For more information contact Harry Wolfe, MAG Socioeconomic Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.



Upcoming Events

Valley Vision 2025 Public Forums Nearing Completion

Nine down, three to go! The final three Valley Vision 2025 public forums will take place over the next two weeks. Forum No. 10 will take place in Gilbert on Tuesday, November 9, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. The forum will be held in the Assembly Room of the Southeast Regional Library, 775 North Greenfield Road. Forum No. 11 is scheduled the next day, Wednesday, November 10, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Rio Salado College in Tempe. The college is located at 2323 West 14th Street and the forum will be held in Room 2A. The final forum is slated for Monday, November 15, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Maricopa Association of Governments, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Ste. 200. Children's activities are available at each of the forums and your participation is welcomed and encouraged.

For more information contact Kelly Taft, MAG Public Communications Program Manager, (602) 254-6300.

Next Regional Council Meeting

The next Regional Council Meeting will be held Wednesday, December 8, 1999. Agenda items are expected to include a funding request by the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Managers for equipment; approval of the July 1, 1999 Municipality Resident Population Updates; request for approval of the MAG Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and Single Audit Report for 1999; discussion and recommended approval of the MAG Pedestrian Plan 2000; discussion of the FY 2000 MAG Enhanced Early Phase Input Opportunity Report; an update on state planning requirements; and a discussion of reductions of Social Services Block Grant Funds. The meeting will be held at the MAG office, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix, in Suite 200 (Saguaro Room).

For more information contact Dennis Smith, MAG Assistant Director, (602) 254-6300.